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464 The sites of heavy industry are, however, in the Urals and in the Kuznetz basin in Central Siberia, both outside the five republics of Turkistan. This great combine, with its iron-ore at Magnitogorsk, and very rich coal deposits in the Kuznetz, supplied the metallurgical foundation of the heavy industry base which was to supplement, and if necessary replace, the old industrial areas of the Ukraine. At Magnitogorsk, next door to the iron-ore mines, were sited the steel-foundries. Also in Bashkiria, not far away, is Ishimbay, the [315] focal point of the region now known as the Second Baku,[1] the wells of which may now be yielding as much as 19 million tons of oil a year. All these, although beyond the northern limit of Kazakistan, are situated in what was once a country of Turkish nomads, and their development was made possible largely by the use of Kazak unskilled labour. As John Scott wrote :[2]

> His ancestors for centuries had raised stock on the flat plains of Kazakistan. They had been dimly conscious of the Czarist government ; they had had to pay taxes. Reports of the Kirghiz insurrection in 1916 had reached them. They had heard stories of the October Revolution ; they even saw the Red Army come and drive out a few rich landlords. They had attended meetings of the Soviet without understanding very clearly what it was all about. Now he was building a blast furnace bigger than any in Europe. He had learned to speak Russian, he read newspapers. His life had changed more in a year than that of his antecedents since the time of Tamerlane.
>
> Some fifty thousand Magnitogorsk workers were directly under GPU supervision. About eighteen thousand de-Kulakized well-to-do farmers, and from twenty to thirty-five thousand criminals — thieves, prostitutes, embezzlers who performed unskilled labour usually under guard — these formed the reservoir of labour power needed to dig foundations — and do other heavy work.

[1] 'The Second Baku' is the propaganda name attached to a vast region stretching from the Volga to the Urals, producing over 11 m. tons of oil in 1950 and expected to reach an output of some 19 m. tons in 1952. Ishimbay is the centre of the most productive wells. Others are at Tuimazi, also in Bashkiria, at Syzran and Buguruslan, near Kuibishev, on the Volga bend, and at Krasnokamsk on the Kama farther north. Most of this was once Golden Horde territory.

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 16 and 70.

2 [see cat. 116, pp. 89-90 -- Analyst]

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disentangle achievement from expansive visions existing only in the planner's mind, there is no doubt that in Farghana, in the Chu–Talash area, and also on the Zarafshan and the Vakhsh, much good work has been brought to a conclusion. The best-known completed works are:

(*a*) The Stalin Great Farghana Canal, 270 km. long.
(*b*) The Mikoyan, or Northern Farghana, Canal, 165 km. long.
(*c*) The Andreev, or Southern Farghana, Canal, 108 km. long.
(*d*) The Katta Kurgan and Verkhno-Bukhara Reservoirs on the Zarafshan.
(*e*) The Great Chu Canal, 270 km. long.
(*f*) The Vakhsh Canal.

The construction of the first was widely advertised, with due praise allotted to the 160,000 *Kolkhoz* members who dug it out, and completed it in forty-five days. The availability of *corvée* labour of this kind, which can be used in the off-season for irrigation work, must greatly aid the authorities in their task, not only on construction but on maintenance and silt-clearance. The official case is that a considerable percentage of all *Kolkhoz* workers in canal areas is used for such duties, and the labourers while absent from their homes receive their fair share of *Kolkhoz* produce. That may work in the rich and smiling Farghana Valley. But how is the case with those transported to dig in the wastes of the deserts? The logistical effort alone needed to feed armies of workers in the Karakum must be colossal.

It has been suggested that construction of the Stalin-Farghana Canal called out nearly one million labourers and that there was suffering on a large scale. Yet, in the face of all criticism, there remains an impression that this in itself was a great work, which has added much to the fertility of an already productive region. Systems of government change, but an irrigation work remains.

Since the war there has been planning on a far grander